

President's Message May 2018

By: Greg Smith

For the general meeting in April Sam Davidson stepped up at the last minute to give a presentation. Representing The Carmel Valley Steelhead Association, Sam spoke to our club about the Association and its role in the conservation of the steelhead fishery on the Carmel River. Sam highlighted items that the CVSA is responsible for while working with the various governing agencies to help restore and rebuild the Carmel River. One of the major restoration projects that was recently completed was the placing of large boulders in the Carmel Lagoon. This project is a big step in restoring the "safe zones" for the steelhead smolts. Continuing on a positive note, CVSA, Trout Unlimited, the Monterey Regional Park District and others recently acquired funding to purchase a portion of the Rancho Canada golf course. In many eyes this is a major addition to the public lands in Carmel Valley. This new acquisition is called the Palo Corona. Hopefully in August, SVFF will be able to have a club outing to get a close look at the new park.

Many thanks go to Sam Davidson, Alex and Sherry Aliganga, for rejoining the SVFF for 2018. Once again Bill Pshide is finding those bargain raffles items. During the April raffle it was noted that the winner of the white ticket drawing was Loren Kitamura who went home with a new 3-4 wt. Talon reel. Not only did Loren win the new reel, but he won the ticket for six new flies for the fly box. Yes Loren, old striper flies will work.

Fly Tying: At this month's fly tying session Bill Pshide patiently helped all of us tie John Barr's Copper John. This is one of my favorite trout and bluegill flies. Lou DaSilva came to fly tying for the first time, and did good work with this difficult fly. Congratulations Lou. Dave Gambetta told the Group that Girl Scout cookies have no calories. The winner of fly tying night's raffle was Jay Jefferson, who went home with a new fly box.

Club outing / Jay Jefferson / Fish Master

April 14th, Hunter Liggett Kid's Derby: This was my first time to attend The Kid's Fishing Derby. Weather was great and there was a good turnout for the event. Some said the attendance was down, but couldn't tell it by me. Families lined the shoreline elbow to elbow, almost like combat fishing. With that said, between the booths, food and fishing, I know everyone had a good time. Did someone say food? Seeing the two large BBQ Pits, I had to volunteer to help with the cooking. But wait, there might have been a Muddy Duck award sighting. Jay, do two wet knees count as deserving an award? Stay tuned. Many thanks go to Chris Slough for hosting the pot luck dinner Saturday night for the SVFF campers.

Fishing updates:

Dave Gambetta, Roger Caton and Loren Kitamura headed to Naci earlier in the month to fish for White Bass and Small Mouth Bass. It sounds like the boys hit it perfect, with Dave using his special fly. It should be noted that pictures don't lie. Was that Loren taking a nap in the boat?

Tim Frahm sent word that the perch and stripers are running along the beaches from Monterey to Santa Cruz, Thank you Tim.

Pete Arnaudo went to Kennedy Meadows on his annual family outing, and found a few fish.

Loren and Roger recently tested their skills at "Big Louie", finding a couple of fish and hiding from the Park Ranger keeping the fisherman away from the Trash Racks, (time to wear Camo).

Healing the Habitat: Where are the Fish?

For the last two summers, Nikki and I have traveled from Northern California to Washington, camping, visiting friends, sightseeing, and fishing. Along the way I talked to many fisherman, and it seems the old timers, (veterans of the water), all say, "Fishing is not like it used to be". I visited a couple of fish hatcheries, river restoration projects, and in Washington the remains of the tallest dam to be taken down in the United States located (in The Olympic National Forest, on the Eway River). Indians there claim that 100 lb. salmon used to travel up the Eway River to spawn. Good news, steelhead are now again making their way up the river.

I visited the Cowlitz fish hatchery, funded by Tacoma Energy, where they plant thousands of trout into the Cowlitz and other rivers. A father and son spend a month each year camping below the Cowlitz hatchery, and in a normal year they catch 60-100 fish. This past year it was only 20 fish for the month.

When I stopped at the fly shop in Poulsbo Washington, I spoke to the owner, a California native. I told him about my tours to the various hatcheries and the amount of Fish put back into various river and lakes. He was very sincere when he firmly said, "stocking the lakes and rivers with trout doesn't work unless you have the habitat to "support the fish". Ouch, a reality check for me. In California, when the dams were built, the thought was that if the Fish and Game plants high numbers of fish in the river below the Dams, all would be good in the rivers and the fishermen would be happy. The Sierra Club has stated "that the hatchery and fish plantings have failed". Same story, fishing is not like it used to be. Take the Carmel River as an example. At one time it was the 3rd best steelhead river in the state, behind the Eel and the Mad River. It should be note noted that a few steelhead are still making it up the Carmel River. Recently I attended a tree planting day at the newly acquired Palo Corona, located next to the Carmel River, sponsored by Trout Unlimited. I was told that there is a mile of Carmel River bed that needs to be planted with willows, redwoods and a few other native species. Restoration starts in our backyard, and maybe with the combined efforts of Conservation groups like Trout Unlimited and others restoring the Carmel River one tree at a Time we can make a difference. One boulder at a time, a life time of work. Many thanks go out to Kristy Fischer and Tim Frahm for their tireless efforts in land acquisition and restoration .

Greg

